



*Supporting Those Who Serve*

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:  
Kimberly Quiros, Chief of Communications  
240-297-3567; [kimberly@nvfc.org](mailto:kimberly@nvfc.org)

### **Fire Departments Seek Volunteers to Serve Communities Nationwide**

**GREENBELT, Md., Dec. 1, 2015** – Whenever there is an emergency – a fire, a car wreck, or a medical crisis – most people rely on their local fire department for help. What most don't realize is that in these situations, there's a good chance that the emergency responders who answer the call are **volunteers**. In fact, 69 percent of the nation's firefighters are volunteers, and 90 percent of fire departments utilize either an all-volunteer force or a combination of volunteer and career personnel.

Fire service volunteers respond to all types of emergencies, providing communities critical protection with fire suppression, emergency medical services, search and rescue, traffic incident management, natural disaster response, and hazardous materials incidents. Communities nationwide count on these volunteers to be there in their greatest times of need.

Yet fire departments need more volunteers. According to the National Fire Protection Association, the number of volunteer firefighters has declined by 12 percent over the last three decades while call volume has tripled. To compound this issue, the fire service is experiencing a generational shift and is especially seeking younger members to fill the ranks as older members look towards retirement.

To help with departments' efforts to recruit new volunteers, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) has launched a new campaign to connect potential volunteers with their local departments. Interested individuals can go to [www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org](http://www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org) to learn more about the volunteer fire and emergency services and find volunteer opportunities with their local department.

The campaign also provides an online resource portal for fire and rescue departments, where current personnel can customize recruitment materials and upload their department's volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers save taxpayers nationwide an estimated \$140 billion per year, and many communities simply could not afford to staff a department if it were not for volunteers. A strong volunteer fire and emergency service now and in the future is critical to ensure the department is ready when the call comes in.

Many people are looking for ways to give back to their community, but few realize the opportunities that are available through their local fire department. Volunteers are needed as firefighters and EMTs, as well as in supporting roles to help departments with a variety of responsibilities. Local departments all across the nation are looking to their community members to answer the call to serve in this hands-on and meaningful way. Emergency service volunteers make a true difference and fill a critical need in their community.

“Our country relies on the dedication and service of the over one million volunteer firefighters, EMTs, and rescue workers to protect our communities,” said NVFC Chairman Kevin D. Quinn. “It takes commitment and dedication to be a volunteer responder, but the rewards are overwhelming. We invite all who may be interested to visit [www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org](http://www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org) and find out what opportunities are available in your community.”

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**About the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC)**

The NVFC is the leading nonprofit membership association representing the interests of the volunteer fire, EMS, and rescue services. The NVFC serves as the voice of the volunteer in the national arena and provides invaluable resources, programs, training, and advocacy for first responders across the nation. Learn more at [www.nvfc.org](http://www.nvfc.org).